



PARENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023



Easterseals of Southeastern PA

Connect with us



**These values are the foundation of
Easterseals/The Friendship Academy
and will guide our actions:**



Integrity

We conduct business ethically, and with a commitment to moral integrity. We expect people to hold a high moral standard. When faced with an ethical dilemma, we do what is right, regardless of the consequences.



Respect

We respect each other. We value the uniqueness and dignity of each individual, and appreciate the strength of diversity and inclusion.



Shared Purpose

We share a sense of purpose. We have an enthusiastic sense of mission. We believe that to better meet our mission, we must work as a unified organization.



Excellence

We value excellence. We value people who get involved and show a sense of urgency. We believe it takes excellent, confident and accountable people to create innovative solutions that are valued by the people we serve.



Responsiveness

We strive to continually understand and proactively respond to the increasing and changing needs of the people we serve as well as those who pay for the services.



GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE: Prompt and regular attendance is important in allowing your child to get the most out of their educational program.

ABSENCES: Parents are to contact the school in the event that their child will be absent. State law requires that a written excuse be submitted to the teacher on the day of a child's return to school following any absence of three or more days. Excuses should be addressed to the teacher and include the dates and exact reason(s) for absence

CLOTHING: Your child should wear comfortable play clothing to school. For safety reasons, we strongly recommend that you send your child to school wearing closed-toe sturdy shoes or sneakers.

Please send a complete change of clothing for your child in case of a toileting mishap or messy activity. Bring or send them to school marked with your child's name.

Send replacement clothes whenever your child has had to use the original supply, when the seasons change, or when your child has outgrown the clothes. Children do have outside activities almost daily, so please apply sun screen at home before your child comes in to school during the summer.

Please make sure that every item of clothing you send, or that your child wears, has your child's name on it. This includes all outer clothing such as coats, scarves, mittens, boots and any equipment that your child uses.

TOILETING NEEDS: If your child is not independent with toileting, please send a periodic supply of disposable diapers to school. You will be notified by your child's teacher when additional diapers are needed. If your child is in the process of being toilet trained, let us know how it is being done so that we can support your efforts in the same way during the school day. During this learning period, it is helpful if you send your child to school in clothes that are loose and easily removed. Please try to avoid belts or one piece outfits. Please let us know of any special word or gesture your child uses to indicate his/her need to use the bathroom.

LOST ARTICLES: The Friendship Academy is not responsible for lost, misplaced, stolen or broken items, articles of clothing, and equipment belonging to visitors, clients, or staff. We will make every effort to ensure that personal items are properly handled on our property. It is best if your child does not wear expensive jewelry to school.

LUNCH AND SNACK: If your child is in a full-day class, they must bring their own lunch including a beverage. To ease the lunch process, please perform all necessary preparations at home. Please pack hot or cold foods in a thermos or insulated container. Remember to label the lunch box, thermos and food containers.

Please send nutritious food that your child likes to eat. Send only the amount your child will eat. There is no sharing of food unless it is a special occasion and the teacher has been notified in advance. Our staff encourage children to try each food, but recognize that they do not always eat everything. If your child is not permitted snacks and is on a special diet, make certain you send in a list of foods that are not allowed.

Some of our children do have serious food allergies. If there is a food restriction (e.g., no peanuts or peanut products) in your child's school building, you will be notified by the program. Most of our buildings are now nut-free zones.

COMMUNICATION BOOKS: Each child will have a communication book or folder that will go back and forth between home and school. Please be sure to check your child's book/folder every day for any school notices or memos from staff. Active use of this book is the best way to ensure timely communication between home and school.

PHONE CALLS: If there is an issue that requires immediate attention, please do not use the communication book; call the school's Program Director or Division Director.

SCHOOL SECURITY AND BUILDING ACCESS: The doors of the building are locked at all times. The front door has a security system. All parents and visitors are required to buzz in and identify themselves. Once identified, the receptionist will allow entry. All are required to get a name tag, and sign the visitor sheet, indicating which room/child that they are here to see. Upon exiting the building, the visitor must sign out.

A list of designated people authorized to pick up your child in your absence will be required. You can revise this list at any time with a phone call to the program.

SCHOOL OBSERVATIONS: We know how important it is for you to be able to trust us with your child's daily care and supervision. One of the ways we ensure this trust is to invite parents to observe the school program. If you choose to do so, it is best to call and check on the activities planned for the day to make the most of your visit.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL: At the Media location, children remain under the supervision of their parents/guardians until 8:50 a.m. (morning session) and 12:25 p.m. (afternoon session), after which they are escorted back to their classrooms with staff. Staff accompany children to the front lobby for dismissal. Parents/guardians are to use the crosswalk when walking to and from the school building.

At the Marple location, arrival and departure is through the F door. Parents should park in the parking lot and walk their child to the door. **Parents will be met by staff outside the building during pick-up and drop-off.** Please remain with your child until an Easterseals staff person greets him/her. Children are escorted to/from the F door by classroom staff. At dismissal, parents should meet their child at the F door. If you drop off your child before 8:30 a.m. or pick up after 3:00 p.m., classroom staff will provide you with instructions on how to contact our staff, who will come to the door to accept/dismiss your child.

Children MUST be supervised by an adult at all times.

All children are released to their parent or those authorized adults listed on the child's Transportation Release form. A parent can write a note or call to arrange alternate transportation not previously authorized. When staff are not familiar with an authorized person, a picture ID is required.

Please pick up your child on time. You will be billed \$5 for every five minutes you are late picking up your child. After two late pick-ups of more than 15 minutes, staff will meet with you to discuss your child's continued enrollment in the program.

VEHICLE IDLING: In an effort to maintain optimum outdoor air quality, families are asked not to idle their vehicles in the parking lot areas, and in the drop off/pickup lines as well.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN: Teaching staff directly supervise all children by sight and hearing at all times, even when the children are in quiet areas. Staff regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition, and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another, to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times. Developmentally appropriate child:staff ratios shall be met during all hours of operation, including indoor and outdoor play and field trips, following precautions for specific areas and equipment.

SCHOOL VISITORS: Throughout the school year, we have visitors that come in to see the school program. Some visitors may be interested in making donations to support our programs and like to visit the school before doing so.

Additionally, as students make decisions about future careers, their high schools or colleges may often require them to spend time in various settings that provide services to children and their families. Visiting students may either observe or participate in classroom activities under the direct supervision of our teachers. We try to accommodate visitors without disruption to our school program.

Covid19 revisions-

- All visitors will be required to wear a mask while in the building and be accompanied by Easterseals employee while in the building to ensure minimal exposure.

WEATHER CLOSINGS: The Friendship Academy uses a robocall notification system for school closings, late openings, and early dismissals. In addition, the school usually follows the decision announced for the school district where the school is located.

HOLIDAY PARTIES: Parties or special activities are often provided by community groups, parent groups, and/or staff. You will be informed in advance about these special events.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES: We would be happy to hold a small in-school celebration of your child's birthday. Please contact the teacher a few days prior to the date. Invitations to at-home parties may only be distributed in school if each member of your child's class receives an invitation. You may send in a healthy snack, but please check with your child's teacher regarding allergies.

TUITION: Timely payment of tuition as agreed to on your enrollment/agreement form is required. Tuition is due on or before the 1st of every month. Non-compliance with this payment agreement will result in the application of a \$10 late fee on all payments received after the 15th day. A fee of \$25 will be charged for each check returned by the

bank. Non-payment of fees may result in immediate termination without notice.

THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

EDUCATION: The Friendship Academy is an inclusive learning program for all children. Our curriculum is research based and developmentally appropriate to prepare children for kindergarten. Our classrooms are led by certified teachers who provide a wide range of learning experiences for all children.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS: Easterseals/The Friendship Academy is a member of the state's Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) network. PBIS is a framework for supporting the social and emotional development of our students. The goal of implementing PBIS is to create an environment where every child feels good about coming to school. This is accomplished by designing classroom settings that promote engagement and by building positive relationships among students, families, and school staff. Through the process of PBIS, classroom staff will work together to ensure that children understand behavior expectations, receive instruction in social skills, and those with the most persistent challenging behavior receive individualized assistance. We will use positive approaches when addressing behaviors that interfere with learning. All staff will receive foundation training in PBIS and each of our Easterseals Divisions have established/will establish Core Leadership Teams to provide ongoing support to staff and families regarding PBIS.

Here are a few examples of what to look for in our programs implementing PBIS:

- Emphasis on building caring, responsive relationships with students and families.
- Behavior expectations and rules posted in common areas and classrooms. Behavior expectations and rules are developmentally appropriate and focus on teaching our students what to do (rather than what not to do).
- Safe classroom environments that are designed to promote positive social interactions.
- Positively stated directions and language are used by all program staff. We focus on teaching our children what to do with language such as "walking feet," "quiet voice," and "hands to self."
- Visual aids to assist students are used throughout the day. These may include visual schedules, visual timers, and pictures to remind students of appropriate behavior.
- Emphasis on social emotional skills and development of social skills. Friendship building, emotional vocabulary, anger management, and coping/problem solving skills are incorporated in large and small group activities.

The Friendship Academy uses positive behavioral supports when addressing behaviors that interfere with learning. Positive strategies include proactive classroom management techniques such as clear rules and procedures, natural reinforcements and consequences, direct instruction of desired appropriate skill, and environmental or curriculum adaptations. Other strategies include social stories, cueing, redirection and family involvement.

****For complete information on Easterseals Policy on Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)/Discipline, please see attached Appendix #1.**

ASSESSMENTS AND SCHOOL CONFERENCES: A research-based developmental screening tool is used within 45 days of enrollment to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies. Families who are new to the program will have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher within 45 days of enrollment. Authentic assessments of your child and conferences will be offered at least twice a year.

ACCESS TO RECORDS: The Friendship Academy recognizes the family's educational right to review, inspect and copy any educational records related to their child's program. The Friendship academy will comply with any written requests from parents within five working days.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The Friendship Academy respects the privacy of each family we serve and adheres to strict confidentiality guidelines. These include regulations which govern the exchange of educational records (FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and those which deal with protected health information (HIPAA-Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act).

MANDATED REPORTING: Under federal and state laws, The Friendship Academy is required to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect, and to report any incidents that involve client health and safety. If an investigation is required by State law, it will be conducted by a Certified Investigator.

For more information about mandated reporting, please check the Keep Kids Safe website at www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/laws.

****To review our Easterseals Policy on Child Abuse-Protection and Reporting, please see attached Appendix #2.**

EMERGENCY PLANS: The Friendship Academy maintains an emergency plan for each site that addresses the use of the school as a shelter for children/staff in the event of a declared emergency. An off-site location is identified in the event the building needs to be evacuated. Penn State is the off-site location for the Media program, St Luke Church is the location for the Marple program. Parents will be notified via the robocall voice messaging system. All sites also have posted emergency evacuation plans, and practice evacuation procedures on a regular basis. During monthly fire drills, staff continue to refine plans to move children quickly and safely out of the building.

The Friendship Academy practices regularly scheduled lock-down drills.

In addition, each site maintains its own daily security procedures, which include signing in and out of the building and wearing a visitor's badge while in the school. A list of designated people authorized to pick up your child in your absence will be required. You can revise this list at any time with a phone call to the program.

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

HEALTH REPORT/PHYSICAL: For admission to school, each child needs a health report dated no more than 1 year prior to the first day of attendance. An updated health report is required every 12 months.

IMMUNIZATIONS: Pennsylvania schools maintain a record of immunization for each student. Failure to produce the proper evidence of immunization within 60 days of the start of school may result in exclusion from school until the records are up to date. A list of the updated immunization requirements, as per the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) Schedule for preschool group settings is as follows:

- For attendance in **preschool group settings:**
 - 3 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)
 - 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (5th dose to be administered between 4-6 years of age)
 - 1 dose of measles, mumps, rubella(preferably given as MMR; 2nd dose to be given between 4-6 years of age)
 - 3 doses of Hepatitis B
 - Rotavirus: 2 doses of RV1 or 3 doses of RV5
 - 1 doses of Varicella or chicken pox from vaccine or by history of disease (2nd dose to be given between 4-6 years of age)
 - 3-4 doses of Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib) dose requirement is dependent upon vaccine used in primary series
 - 4 doses of Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV13)
 - 2 doses of Hepatitis A (Hep A)

We strongly urge you to consult with your child's physician as soon as possible. If your child has already received these vaccinations, please submit a copy of the record from your doctor immediately. If your child has not received the required immunizations, please schedule an appointment and send in a copy of the documentation as soon as it is completed.

MEDICAL UPDATES: Please keep us updated on any new medical information, i.e., new allergy.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ILL

MEDICAL POLICY: Sick children are to be kept out of school when they are unable to participate in school activities and need rest and care at home. Keeping children at home when they do not feel well also helps prevent the spread of illness among children and staff.

A child who is ill should not be brought to school until s/he has been well, and without diarrhea/vomiting and/or fever (free without aspirin or Tylenol), for 24 hours.

AT HOME: While your child may not have a fever in the morning before school, if s/he is lethargic, very cranky, or crying excessively, you should consider keeping your child at home. These symptoms may indicate that your child is developing an illness. If your child is not able to participate in school-day activities, s/he should be kept at home. A sick or ailing child will not benefit from being in class or receiving therapy and would not enjoy the day in our program.

If your child has any of the following symptoms and/or illnesses, please do not send your child to school.

- fever 100.4°F or more
- diarrhea or vomiting
- severe headaches
- sore throat and/or swollen glands
- lethargy or weakness, no appetite, or irritability
- untreated rash or skin infection
- contagious illnesses such as fungal infections, lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pinworm, impetigo, , ringworm, hand/foot/mouth disease.

Your child should be kept home until the symptoms are no longer present or your child's doctor has given permission for your child to attend school.

If a contagious illness is noted during the school day, the parent will be required to pick the child up from school as soon as possible in order to protect other children. Children who have had a contagious illness will also require a doctor's note for readmission to school. The Friendship Academy follows the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics regarding contagious illnesses.

For health and safety reasons, any child identified with lice will be excluded at the end of the day. Children may return only after treatment.

AT SCHOOL: Our teachers become quite familiar with your child's daily behavior. If they see behavior or symptoms that are atypical for your child, they will request that the school nurse monitor your child. If the nurse determines that your child is unable to participate, she will contact you.

If your child has been absent from school due to illness, please write a note or phone the school to inform his/her teacher as to the nature of your child's illness. It is helpful for the staff to know the reason your child was ill.

If anything on the preceding list of symptoms occurs while your child is in school, you will be asked to come and pick up your child. No medication can be given without written permission.

While we realize many of you are working, we do not always have the facilities to keep your child isolated. Therefore, we request that arrangements be made to pick your child up as soon as possible when symptoms occur in school.

If you cannot be reached, the emergency contact person(s) you have identified will be notified to pick up your child. It is important that emergency contact information be up to date and those persons listed are aware of their responsibility to come to the school to pick up a child who is ill when you cannot be reached.

If your child has been to the Emergency Room or hospitalized or has a significant change of medical condition, the school must have a note from the doctor stating the reason for the ER visit/hospitalization, and that your child may return to school. The school needs this note to ensure proper care for your child. We will be unable to allow your child to return to school without the note. Please share any discharge orders.

PLEASE REMEMBER ... if you send your child to school with any doubt about his/her health, please advise the teacher by way of your child's communication book or call her directly. If you will be somewhere other than home or work, give us the number of a person to call who could come to school for your child.

MEDICATION POLICY

Your child may require medication or a special procedure during the school day. Sometimes your child may be well enough to attend school yet require medication to clear up an infection or medical problem. To give medication, or carry out a medical procedure, we need the following:

- A **MEDICAL RELEASE FORM** on file to enable staff to give medications or perform procedures without liability. A physician's authorization form is needed, as well as instructions and a demonstration in order to train our staff.
- A **MEDICATION INFORMATION FORM** stating the name of the medication, the dosage, the time intervals and the duration for giving the medication. All prescription medication **MUST** be in a pharmacy-labeled bottle (including the child's name, medication name, dosage strength, doctor's name and pharmacy name).

Medications and forms are to be sent directly to the teacher/nurse. No medication of any type (such as aspirin, cough drops, eardrops, vitamins) will be given without written instructions and written parental consent. Certain procedures may require physician's orders. All medication will be kept in a safe place inaccessible to children.

EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Emergency situations do occur and we must be as prepared as possible. In case of an emergency, it is vital that we know where to reach parents and that we have at least two emergency numbers on file if we cannot reach you. Emergency contacts must have a working phone and be willing to pick up your child in the event of an emergency. If you do not have a working phone, you still must make arrangements so that we have a way of contacting you in case of emergency (such as a neighbor's or relative's phone). It is the parent's responsibility to keep this information current.

None of us like to think that our children will become ill or injured while they are in school. However, we must make plans in the event that an illness or injury was to occur. The **EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM** will provide us with your instructions as to how you wish emergency procedures to be handled for your child. You can choose to just sign the approval for emergency treatment, which would allow us to have your child treated at a neighboring hospital.

Several staff are trained in first aid. If further medical attention is necessary our standard procedure is to contact 911 for transport to the nearest hospital.

If your child is taken to the hospital, s/he will always be accompanied by at least one staff member. If you can be reached by phone, other staff will notify you immediately. However, if we cannot reach you, we will contact the person you name as your emergency contact. Parents are notified as soon as possible, which may or may not be before treatment has begun.

It is not a safe situation to have children in school without the proper emergency medical forms. The Emergency Medical Form must be signed and turned in to the nurse/teacher by the first day of school, or your child cannot attend school.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are a vital part of what happens in The Friendship Academy programs. Parents are an integral part of the team. Effective communication between parents and staff is an important component of each child's program. Involvement with other parents provides a rich resource of information, ideas and skills.

GIFTS FOR STAFF: The Friendship Academy policy prohibits individual staff from accepting any gift of a personal nature or substantial value. Items of a minor nature, such as homemade gifts, flowers, etc., that can be shared by all staff are acceptable. The Friendship Academy gratefully accepts gifts/donations at any time of the year to support the work we do.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Parents are encouraged to participate in special events and promotions that are held to benefit Easterseals/The Friendship Academy programs. These events are varied and are held in all five Divisions throughout the year. For further information about these events, contact the Public Relations/Communications Department at (215) 879-1000.

WHERE TO TURN...

From time to time, you will have questions for the staff. Below is a guide to assist you in determining who is best suited to answer your questions.

Your child's program and educational goals	Teacher or Program Director/Coordinator
Your child's medical needs	Nurse
Family Issues/ Community Resources	Program Director or Family Engagement Coordinator
School Volunteer Involvement/Support	Program Director or Family Engagement Coordinator
General Administrative Policy	Division Director
Special Events Volunteer	Director of Development

To make a referral for Early Intervention, please call the **CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288**

Appendix 1

Easterseals of Southeastern Pennsylvania Operating Policies, Procedures & Practices

**Subject: Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS)
Guidance/Discipline**

Section: C Number: 5

It is the policy of Easterseals to use positive behavioral supports for the individuals we serve. Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a positive approach to behavior support that focuses on utilizing strategies that prevent challenging behavior. PBIS provides staff the skills to ensure that all individuals are free from demeaning treatment including coercion, psychological abuse, physical punishment, the use of aversive techniques and the unreasonable use of restraints. It is our goal to utilize PBIS to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures in compliance with federal and state civil rights laws.

Exclusionary measures (as defined within this document) are never considered until all other possible interventions have been exhausted. The variety of techniques used help to develop and maintain positive social skills will enhance the child's opportunity for learning, self-fulfillment and independence. The use of restraints are prohibited except in emergency situations where a child is in imminent risk of harm to themselves or others, there is no other way to prevent that harm, and the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening.

Staff is trained in Safety Care crisis prevention. The focus is on prevention, safety, and supportive evidence-based interventions.

Definitions [PA Regulations 14.133(b)]

With regards to a child's behavior, the following words and terms when used in this policy have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

- Aversive techniques – Deliberate activities designed to establish a negative association with a specific behavior.
- Behavior support – The development, change and maintenance of selected behaviors through the systematic application of behavior change techniques.

- Positive techniques – Methods which utilize positive reinforcement to shape an eligible young child’s behavior, that range from the use of positive verbal statements as a reward for good behavior to specific tangible rewards.
- Restraints – the application of physical force, with or without the use of a device for the purpose of restraining the free movement of a student. The term includes physical and mechanical restraints.

Positive Strategies {PA Regulations 14.133 (a) }

Positive learner behaviors are vital components in the achievement of education success for all children. Inappropriate behavior may negatively impact on the programming for an individual. When behavior interferes with productive learning, a plan to address the behavior is needed. The promotion of social emotional development and the following positive approaches are to be considered when addressing behavior concerns:

- Proactive classroom management techniques such as: clear rules and procedures, effective teaching practices, natural reinforcements and consequences, direct instruction of desired skill, frequent monitoring, environmental adaptations, and curriculum adaptation.
- Positive social behavior strategies such as: adult/peer modeling, cueing, use of social stories.
- Behavioral techniques such as: manipulation of antecedents and consequences, systematic reinforcement, redirection, and ongoing communication between home and school.

Behavior Support Plan

In those situations where an individual may not respond universal/tier one positive behavioral preventative strategies and more support is needed to address the challenging behavior, the team will develop positive behavior strategies or a Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP) that addresses the identified function (s) of the challenging behavior. Depending upon the individual situation, the development of this plan would be preceded by either an informal or formal behavior assessment of the child. The process would include the following steps:

- Review of any educational records
- Interview with families and teacher in regards to history of challenging behavior, daily routines, and strategies already in place
- Identify the behavior (s) of concern
- Gather information/data about the target behavior
- Develop hypothesis about the function of the behavior
- Design an intervention plan
- Implement the plan and collect data on effectiveness
- Modify plan as required
- Fade support according to plan hierarchy

The plan needs to include safety procedures for situations when a child may be of harm to themselves or others.

Prohibited Staff Practices

There are no circumstances when it is permissible to use the following practices as defined below:

- **Physical Punishment:** Shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, and pulling of arms, hair, or ears; requiring a child to remain inactive for a long period of time.
- **Psychological abuse:** shaming, name calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, or frightening a child; ostracism, withholding affection.
- **Coercion:** Rough handling (shoving, pulling, pushing, grasping any body part); forcing a child to sit down, lie down, or stay down, except when restraint is necessary to protect the child or others from harm; physically forcing a child to perform an action (such as eating or cleaning up).

Restraints [PA Regulations 14.133(c)]

Chapter 14.133(c) defines restraints as the application of physical force, with or without the use of a device for the purpose of restraining the free movement of a student. The term does not include briefly holding, without force, a child to calm or comfort them; guide a child to an appropriate activity or holding a child's hand to safely escort them from one area to another.

The term does not include hand over hand assistance with feeding or task completion and techniques prescribed by a qualified medical professional for reasons of safety or for therapeutic or medical treatment, as agreed to by the child's parent as documented on the child's *Therapeutic Positioning Agreement* and specified in the IEP.

The use of restraints are prohibited except in emergency situations where a child is in imminent risk of harm to themselves or others, there is no other way to prevent that harm, and the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening. If a child meets the criteria, staff trained in Safety Care will intervene. Safety Care is behavioral safety training for staff who work with children who exhibit challenging behavior.

If restraints are used, a meeting of the IEP team must convene within 10 days to review the current IEP for appropriateness and effectiveness. The use of restraints will not be included in the IEP for the convenience of staff, as a substitute for an educational program, or employed as punishment. When a restraint has been used, parents shall be contacted as soon as possible, but no more than one program day following the incident. The IEP team must convene within 10 days, unless the parent waives the meeting in writing. Following the use of any restraint, the

Bureau of Early Intervention needs to be notified within 48 hours and the Incident Reporting form needs to be sent (attached).

Any time a restraint is used, it will be treated as a reportable incident as defined in the agency's incident management policy.

Mechanical Restraints [PA Regulations 14.133(d)]

Mechanical restraints, which are used to control involuntary movement or lack of muscular control of an individual when due to organic causes or conditions, may be employed only when specified by an IEP and as determined by a medical professional qualified to make the determination, and as agreed to by an individual's parents. Mechanical restraints shall prevent an individual from injuring him/herself or others or promote normative body positioning and physical functions.

Training

Easterseals will train all staff annually as a proactive measure to reduce the probability of using restraints. Safety Care training focuses on positive behavioral strategies and using safety techniques that protect as well as minimize the risk of injury to the staff and the individuals.

Suspension and Expulsion

Our goal is also to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures in compliance with federal and state civil rights laws.

All of the following actions are included in this definition of suspension:

1. Excluding a child from the classroom, whether by placing him/her in another part of the building, or excluding the child from the building;
2. Sending a child home early or limiting the number of hours per day (s)he can attend; or
3. Un-enrolling a child because (s)he is "not a good fit" with the program.

The only circumstances in which our actions may be included in this definition for children with IEP's are:

1. If a child is displaying unsafe behavior, we may need to remove vulnerable peers from the immediate location which may include leaving the classroom.
2. The IEP team (which includes school staff, child's family, LEA representative, and outside providers at discretion of parent) may discuss hours per day a child attends based on developmental appropriateness.

Our programs include some children with typical development. If those children start to display persistent challenging behavior the following steps will be taken:

1. Families will be communicated with ongoing in regards to positive and negative behavior at school.
2. Easterseals internal behavioral supports team will be notified and PBIS tier 2 strategies will be put into place and communicated to classroom staff and family.

3. School staff and family will meet if tier 2 strategies are not effective (based on data collection) and outside referrals will be discussed (wraparound/CBH, Early Intervention Evaluation).
4. Depending on outcome (s) of outside referrals, appropriateness of classroom placement may be discussed. Internal behavior supports team will collaborate with any outside behavioral supports in order to ensure consistency of intervention.

Family Support

Although it is our goal to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures, should it become necessary our team would assist family by providing any necessary support and information in order to facilitate a successful transition.

Detailed information about Easter Seals behavior policies and practices are communicated to parents upon enrollment in the program and on an annual basis.

References:

PaTTAN website “EI Program Guidance for Developing a Behavior Support Policy”
OCDEL Announcement:EI 12 #06
NAEYC Program Portfolio Tool, June 2018

Authority: Executive Director/CEO
Approved: July 24, 2013
Revised: September 11, 2020

(Please send the completed form via email to RA-ocdintervention@pa.gov **AND**
in the subject line write "Restraint")

EI Preschool Name _____

Date of the restraint _____

Child's Secure PA ID _____

_____ **DOB** _____

Primary Disability (*Circle the primary disability*)

Hearing Impairment Developmental Delay Visual Impairment

Emotional Disturbance Speech/Language Impairment Autism

Multiple Disabilities Orthopedic Impairment Brain Injury

Was the use of restraints written into the child's IEP initially? Yes No

Name(s) of staff person(s) and staff title(s) involved in the restraint

Staff Person Staff Title

Are the persons who performed the restraint trained in safety net procedures and safe physical restraint techniques? Yes No Last trained (year)? _____

What events precipitated the restraint? _____

Were Safety Net Procedures used prior to performing the restraint? Yes No

Describe:

Type of Restraint (*Circle all that apply*)

A. Standing (explain hold) _____

B. Seated (explain hold) _____

C. Supine (explain hold) _____

D. Transport (explain hold) _____

E. Other (explain other) _____

Duration of restraint (in minutes) _____

Location of the restraint (playground, classroom, etc.) _____

Did injury occur to the child, staff, or bystanders during the restraint? Yes No

If yes, please explain _____

Was the parent/guardian contacted? Yes No Date of contact: _____
(Date of parent/guardian contact should be no more than 1 program date after the restraint)

Name of parent/guardian contacted _____

Who contacted the parents(s)/guardian? Paraprofessional Professional Supervisor

Did an IEP meeting convene? Yes *Waived

**(If the IEP meeting is waived, there must be a prior written notice of the IEP meeting and the parent's/guardian's written consent to waive the meeting attached to the meeting notice.)*

Did the parent(s)/guardian attend the IPE meeting? Yes No

Date of IEP meeting? _____ (Must occur no more than 10 program days from the date of the restraint)

IEP Meeting Results (Check all that apply) Functional Behavior Assessment _____,
Functional Behavior Assessment Reevaluation _____, New Positive Behavior Support Plan _____,
Revised Positive Behavior Support Plan _____, Change of Educational Placement _____.

What strategies were discussed that will help avoid future restraints? _____

Date the final report was sent to the: RA-ocdintervention@pa.gov

_____ (Not more than 5 program days following the IEP meeting)

Printed name and signature of person that completed the final report:

Appendix 2

Easterseals of Southeastern Pennsylvania Operating Policies, Procedures & Practices

Subject: Child Abuse - Protection & Reporting

Section: C Number: 4

First and foremost at Easterseals is a commitment to the health, safety and well-being of all the clients, particularly children, we serve. To this end we consider it vital to proactively respond to reasonable suspicion of child abuse and neglect when discovered.

As a school entity (per Pennsylvania Act 1084) and as individual service providers (per the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law Chapter 63) we have special responsibilities regarding child abuse and neglect. Under the Child Protective Services Law section 63.3, our staff is considered “Mandated Reporters” of suspected child abuse. This Easterseals policy has been developed to help ensure that we all do what is right by the clients we serve and be in compliance with the laws and regulations governing this important issue.

When there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a client of Easterseals has been abused or neglected, specific actions steps need to be followed regardless of whether the suspected abuser is a staff member, parent/guardian or other person. Reporting of suspected abuse may need to be made to various and/or multiple authorities depending on the child and alleged perpetrator.

It is important to know that an Easterseals staff member does not need proof that abuse has occurred to take action. It is only required that the individual have reasonable cause to suspect abuse. Reasons for suspicion may include such things as:

- ✓ Observation of a child’s physical appearance
- ✓ A child’s verbal or non-verbal communications
- ✓ A change in a child’s behavior (evidence of anxiety, withdrawal, fear or agitation)

The staff member with a reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is being verbally or physically abused is to report his/her suspicions to CHILDLINE. Employees who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action, unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

Families will be informed of Easterseals responsibilities as a Mandated Reporter through the Parent Handbook.

Suspicion of Abuse by a Staff Member

While it might only occur rarely, suspicion of physical and/or verbal abuse of a client by a staff member is a possibility. When someone suspects that a staff member may have abused a client, they are to report that suspicion immediately to CHILDLINE. In any case of a report of suspected abuse by a staff member, the Executive Director/CEO is to be informed immediately. Physical and/or verbal abuse of a client by a staff member will not be tolerated by Easterseals. Disciplinary action, up to and including discharge will occur if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a staff member has abused a client. In addition, if there is reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred, the reporting requirements of Easterseals may also include law enforcement and/or prosecution authorities.

Suspicion of Abuse by a Parent/Guardian or Others

The staff member with a reasonable cause to suspect shall immediately make an oral report to CHILDLINE at 1-800-932-0313. The staff member shall complete a written report which may be submitted electronically within 48 hours to the Department of Human Services or County agency.

Immediately after making the report, the staff member will notify their Division Director.

If the child is registered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) system, the Division Incident Management Point Person is to be contacted so that the Incident Management protocol of the Agency can be initiated. If the child receives Early Intervention (EI) services, an EI Reportable Incident form must be filed with the Office of Child Development & Early Learning (OCDEL). If the child is from birth to 3 years of age, the County EI program is to be notified if the suspected abuse is alleged to have been committed by an Easterseals staff member.

The Easterseals Director of Programs and the Executive Director/CEO are to be informed if a report of suspected abuse has been made to CHILDLINE.

In all cases of a report of suspicion of abuse, complete documentation including conversations, observations, statements and evidence is to be collected and maintained in the child's file/chart.

If an investigative authority asks for additional information from Easterseals, we should ask that it be done in writing on the authority's letterhead. It is always our intent to cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by an authorized agency or entity.

Training

All new employees of Easterseals will receive training on the Agency policy and procedures regarding Child Abuse Protection & Reporting as part of the New Employee Orientation program which occurs within their first 90 days of employment.

As a school entity, it is also required that all employees within 90 days of hire must complete a minimum of three (3) hours of training within 90 days of hire and 3 hours of training every five years thereafter on Child Abuse Protection & Reporting specific to Act 31 of 2014. The initial approved training to be completed within 90 days of hire can be found at

www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu. All employees hired December 31, 2014 or after are required to complete this online training module and submit proof of completion to their supervisor who will forward a copy to Human Resources for the employee's personnel file. The subsequent training will be conducted at the Division level and should encompass the following:

- Recognition of the signs of abuse, which is defined as conduct that falls within the purview and reporting requirements under the Child Protective Services Law;
- Recognition of the signs of sexual misconduct;
- Reporting requirements for suspected abuse and sexual misconduct in the Commonwealth, including those set forth in the Child Protective Services Law and the revised February 2014 Professional Educator Discipline Act;
- Provisions of the Professional Educator Discipline Act (P.L. 397, No. 141) Easterseals policy related to reporting of suspected abuse and sexual misconduct; and
- Maintenance of professional and appropriate relationships with students/clients.

A record of completion of training will be maintained in each employee's personnel file. A sample form for this purpose is attached.

Authority: Board of Directors
Approved: January 21, 2014
Revised: March 17, 2015
September 1, 2018

Easterseals of Southeastern Pennsylvania

CHILD ABUSE PROTECTION & REPORTING TRAINING

I have attended the following training on Easterseals Child Abuse Protection & Reporting policy and procedures as marked below:

New Employee Orientation Program on Date: _____

Division Training on Date: _____

On-Line or Distance Learning on Date: _____

Subject Covered: _____

Print Name: _____

Signed: _____

**EARLY INTERVENTION
REPORTABLE INCIDENT FORM**

DATE OF REPORT:	TIME: AM/PM
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Office of Child Development and Early Learning:
Fax Number: 717-346-9330
Phone Number: 717-265-8901

NAME OF INFANT OR TODDLER (LAST, FIRST, M.I.)			PROVIDER NAME:		
ADDRESS:			ADDRESS:		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
PHONE:		COUNTY OF REGISTRATION:	PHONE:		
INFANT OR TODDLER EIRS NUMBER:			BASE SERVICE UNIT NUMBER		
DATE OF BIRTH: M M D D Y Y Y Y - -		SEX: <input type="checkbox"/> MALE <input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE	DATE THE INCIDENT OCCURRED OR WAS RECOGNIZED/DISCOVERED: M M D D Y Y Y Y - -		
CLASSIFICATION OF INCIDENT:			TIME THE INCIDENT OCCURRED OR WAS RECOGNIZED/DISCOVERED: AM/PM		
DESCRIBE THE TYPE OF INCIDENT AND THE ACTION(S) TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE INFANT/TODDLER'S HEALTH AND SAFETY AND THE RESPONSE TO THE INCIDENT, WHAT HAPPENED, IF A MEDICAL REFERRAL WAS NECESSARY (PLEASE LIST). DOCUMENT ALL OTHER REPORTS OR NOTIFICATIONS AND ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MAY HAVE PRECIPITATED THE INCIDENT. (INCLUDE ACTION TAKEN RELATED TO DISPOSITION OF EMPLOYEE.) ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY.					
NAME OF PERSON RECEIVING REPORT:		TITLE:		PHONE:	

Please remove this page, sign, and return to school. Thank you!

I have read and understand the policies and procedures of The Friendship as stated in the Parent Handbook for School Year 2021/2022.

CHILD'S NAME: _____

PARENT NAME (please print): _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____